

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-6, and 9-20 remain pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

OBJECTIONS

Claims 9 and 16 stand objected to for certain informalities. Claims 9 and 16 are amended to address the informalities taking the Examiner's suggestions into account. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these objections are respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 6, 13, 16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sato et al. (JP 404070351A). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is amended to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Accordingly, claim 1 should be in condition for allowance. Claim 3 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on allowable claim 1.

Claim 6 is amended to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 8 and intervening claim 7. Accordingly, claim 6 should be in condition for allowance. Claims 13, 16 and 17 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on allowable claim 6.

Claim 19 stands rejected under U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Kiguchi et al. (US Patent No. 6,830,855 B2). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 19 is amended to depend from claim 16. Claim 16 depends from claim 6. Claim 19 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on allowable claim 6.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4, 7, 14, 18 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 depends from claim 1. Claim 4 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on allowable claim 1.

Claim 7 is canceled. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

Claims 14, 18 and 20 indirectly depend from claim 6. Claims 14, 18 and 20 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on allowable claim 6.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner states that claims 2, 5, 8-12 and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Regarding claim 2, claim 1 is amended to recite the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Claim 2 is canceled.

Claim 5 is amended to include the subject matter of base claim 1. Therefore, claim 5 should be in condition for allowance.

Regarding claim 8, Claim 6 is amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 8. Claim 8 is canceled.

Claim 9 is amended to include the subject matter of base claim 6. Therefore, claim 9 should be in condition for allowance.

Claims 10 and 11 depend from amended claim 9. Therefore, claims 10 and 11 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 12 is amended to include the subject matter of base claim 6. Therefore, claim 12 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 15 is amended to include the subject matter of base claim 6. Therefore, claim 15 should be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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